

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-8, 11-13 and 15-20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 8, 13 and 15 are amended. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Myles Robinson and Twyler Lamb in the personal interview conducted January 3, 2008. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. Objections to Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) asserting that the drawings do not show every feature of the claimed invention. Claims 1 and 8, as amended, now recite in the preamble "a method for compressing data sent to a printer with no significant change in the output image, comprising." As discussed during the January 3 interview, this preamble is intended to establish the general type of data compression being claimed, *i.e.* data compression that does not compress data at the expense of output quality. It is well understood in the art that there are many different types of data compression, and claims 1 and 8 merely recite a "genre" of data compression, not a limitation that needs to be shown in the figures. Therefore, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

II. §112 Rejection

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-8, 11-13, and 15-20 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action rejects claim 8, asserting that the term "the output image" lacks antecedent basis. Claim 8, as amended, now recites "an output image."

The Office Action also asserts the term "adjacent...to edge pixels" recited in several claims is indefinite because the term adjacent is insufficiently defined. In accordance with the agreement reached during the January 3 interview, claims 1, 3, 8, 13 and 15 now recite that the pixels must be "sequentially adjacent." Furthermore, the claims have been amended to recite that the alteration of the pixels propagates to further sequentially adjacent pixels that meet the proper criteria.

Therefore, in accordance with the agreement reached during the January 3 interview, withdrawal of the §112 rejection is respectfully requested.

III. §102 Rejection

Claims 1, 4-8, 11-13 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,673,987 to Toyokawa. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the January 3 interview, the instant specification explains that to improve image quality in printing, "printing hints in the form of metabits are generated for each image pixel." See page 1, lines 19-20 of specification. These printing hints can contain information relating to, among other properties, the saturation level of a pixel, and whether a pixel is an edge pixel, a background pixel, or a text pixel. See page 7 lines 10-18. These printing hints improve image quality, but increase the amount of data that must be transmitted during printing. The specification further explains that certain types of pixels are treated identically during printing operations by the Contone Rendering Module (CRM), even when a specific printing hint is different. The claimed invention takes advantage of this fact, and converts the printing hints of certain types of pixels, to enable greater compression, as demonstrated in the second and third lines of Fig. 1.

Claims 1, 8 and 13 recite that fully saturated pixels sequentially adjacent to edge pixels will have their printing hints changed to that of edge pixels. However, Toyokawa never discusses edge pixels, nor changing the printing hints of saturated pixels into that of

edge pixels. Toyokawa merely discloses compressing coded block patterns, which the Office Action asserts are analogous to printing hints.

The compression scheme disclosed by Toyokawa is analogous to the second line of Fig. 1 of the instant application. It anticipates grouping sets of pixels having the same value. However, Toyokawa never discloses altering printing hints for further compression, as recited in claim 1 and shown in lines 3 and 4 of Fig. 1 of the instant application. As such, Toyokawa does not disclose each and every element of claims 1, 8 and 13. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 8 and 13; and claims 3-7, 11, 12, and 15-20 depending therefrom; is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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